

A

LETTER

TO

HIS EXCELLENCY

THE EARL OF CLARENDON, K.G.

LORD LIEUTENANT OF IRELAND,

ON THE

COMPLETION OF THE WORKS

IN CONNEXION WITH THE IMPROVEMENT

OF

THE RIVER SHANNON.

BY CHARLES WYE WILLIAMS, ESQ.

DUBLIN :

PRINTED BY WILLIAM UNDERWOOD, EDEN-QUAY.

1849.

RAILWAY EXTENSION TO CORK.

Extract from a Speech of his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant.

On the 18th October 1849, at the celebration of the opening of the extensive line of the Great Southern Western Railway to Cork, His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant arose, and amidst the most enthusiastic acclamation observed, "That it was with no ordinary feelings of gratification he had heard his name associated with the welfare of Ireland, and had witnessed the manner in which the toast had been received by such an assemblage.—The chairman had connected his name with a subject which had long and anxiously occupied his thoughts, and which, no matter whether he should be in a public or private station, should still engage his unremitting solicitude. It was with such feelings as these that he had accepted, with alacrity, the invitation of the chairman and Board of Directors to witness the opening of their railway, because he considered that undertaking as one of paramount importance in relation to the future prosperity of this country. They had all that day an opportunity of witnessing the splendour of the works—the magnificent viaducts—the noble arches—the cuttings and embankments, all finished in the most complete and permanent manner. Their chairman, he observed, had alluded in graceful terms to the loan sanctioned by the Government to promote the completion of this railway; and it was his belief, but for that well-timed loan, that they could not now reach Cork by railway. If they looked back to the period when his noble friend at the head of the Government, with prudent foresight, consented to advance that money, they would find that it was in a time of such pecuniary difficulty that companies even of the highest standing were unable to procure advances upon almost any terms. No doubt, some inconvenience might have been felt by the Chancellor of the Exchequer from a loan at such a time; and they were bound to feel grateful for the consideration and foresight of his noble friend in providing assistance, at such a crisis, to enable the company to facilitate their works, to *give extensive employment when the necessities of the labouring classes so much required it, and thus to hasten the completion of a great line of railway which must prove of incalculable service, in providing for the farmer a ready market for the sale of his produce.* Allusion had been made by the chairman to his (the Lord Lieutenant's) previous visits to this railway, and that to Dundrum especially he well recollected, because he had there availed himself of the opportunity of speaking upon a subject which still filled his mind—he meant *the vast importance of railways in affording facilities for extending improved modes of husbandry—in opening the best and readiest markets for the sale of agricultural produce.* They could not over-estimate the advantages to the farmer which must be conferred by this railway, connecting Dublin, Limerick, and Cork, and the intermediate districts, in one chain of communication. Considerations like these had influenced his noble friend at the head of the Government when he had determined to aid this company by an advance of money. When this railway, at a period of unexampled depression, yielded such a traffic as that now in progress, what extent of increase might they not expect in better times, when the country assumed its normal condition and its vast resources should be amply developed by the efforts of agricultural improvement now becoming so general, facilitated as they would be by the completion of railway communication from one extremity of Ireland to the other. *If ever a railway deserved success it was this—finished in so splendid and permanent a manner, that the works will serve to immortalize the name of the engineer, and the persevering enterprize of the contractor.*"

387
W672

TO HIS EXCELLENCY

THE EARL OF CLARENDON, K.G.

MY LORD,

It is impossible to read your Lordship's speech on the completion of the Railway connecting the three cities of Dublin, Limerick, and Cork, and of which the annexed is an extract, without admitting its justness and appropriate bearing. The perusal of that speech at once suggested the present appeal in favor of an object to which your Lordship's forcible reasoning and comments are peculiarly applicable. I do not solicit your Lordship's attention in favor of any object of private speculation or of minor character, but of one that is unquestionably the most important and extensive line of intercourse in Ireland. One which has been called into existence by the liberality and wisdom of parliament, with the co-operation of Her Majesty's ministers, and by the expenditure of above half a million sterling; I allude to the *river Shannon*, and in reference to its capabilities in a commercial, agricultural, and social point of view—with its two hundred miles of inland navigation—its connexion with no less than ten counties, and a population of above a million of inhabitants within reach of its influence.

I will here briefly state the circumstances of this river and its navigable character, with its power of promoting the most essential element of improvement, rapid and cheap intercourse.

In the year 1831, I addressed a letter to the Right Honorable Thomas Spring Rice, (now Lord Monteagle,) on the then neglected state of the river Shannon, and the great capabilities it possessed. I pointed out the useless and even mischievous

53326

Ja Rice

14 Feb 27

influence it exercised, not only as being unavailable for the purpose of trading or social intercourse, but as a positive obstacle to the free interchange of commodities over three-fourths of its extent; while the absence of all control or regulating power over its waters, produced an extent of inundation greater than the aggregate of all the inundations of all the rivers in the British Islands. Inundations, not mischievous alone from their extent, but the six or seven months of the year during which they continued.

Subsequently, in the year 1835, I addressed a letter to the Right Hon. Sir Robert Peel, when the consideration of this subject was before parliament, shewing, that while a million sterling had been expended on one hundred and thirty miles of *Canada* navigation, called the *Rideau canal and Ottawa river*, and which was made navigable by British means, and by the hands and labor of Irishmen, chiefly from the banks of this very Shannon, yet that not a shilling had been expended in aid of the capabilities of the great home inland navigation of Ireland, although nearly double in extent. I proved from parliamentary documents, that that great expenditure had been made in a district of Upper Canada, which did not contain one thousand inhabitants; while our own great home *Ottawa*—"the *Shannon*," was in sight of above a million of inhabitants, all crying out for improved intercourse, as the means of producing employment for the population, and enabling them to convey their produce to market from its shores of nearly five hundred miles in extent.

I have reason, my Lord, to think that thus directing the attention of the Government to these important facts, was instrumental in producing the Act of 5th & 6th of William the IV., and of the subsequent Act of the 2nd & 3rd of Her present Majesty, entitled, "*An Act for the improvement of the river Shannon.*"

Under this latter act, the munificent sum of £584,897 was authorised to be advanced from the public funds, towards the improving the course of this great river, and rendering it navigable over a course of above two hundred miles—one

hundred and forty of which are above the tide-way at Limerick, and running through the very centre of Ireland.

This act recites that, "The improvement of the navigation of the said river, from its source in Lough Allen, to its mouth, would contribute to the general prosperity, commerce, agriculture, and revenue of Ireland : as also tend to the advantage and improvement of the respective counties, and districts adjoining."

My Lord, I believe that recital to be a correct anticipation of the future influence of this great river navigation. My present object is, *the obtaining your Lordship's aid and influence in effecting its consummation.*

My Lord, I have now the satisfaction of stating, that the sum of half a million sterling having been expended pursuant to the act, its navigation is now completed ; and from personal observation, having during the last five years watched the progress of the numerous works along its course, I am enabled to certify, that the science and engineering skill which they exhibit—the evidence of a superior execution every where visible—together with the substantial and permanent character of these great works, are unsurpassed in the British empire.

Applying your Lordship's appropriate words in favor of the *Railway*, to the great improvement of the *Shannon*, I add, "if ever work demanded success it was this—finished in so splendid and permanent a manner ; these works will serve to immortalize," not, my Lord, "the engineer" or the directing body alone, but the Government which planned, and with persevering zeal, and despite the outcry of the would-be economists, carried out that great enterprize which has since converted a wide waste of waters, in some districts unmanageable from their turbulence, and in others, from their extent of sluggish inundation, into an available source of intercourse among the numerous towns and inhabitants along its course.

In carrying out these great works, difficulties of no ordinary character were to be encountered. Energy, skill, and perseverance, were all requisite, both on the part of Government and the Commissioners.

My Lord, it is impossible correctly to appreciate the character

extent, or importance of these numerous and great works, except by traversing the *one hundred and fifty miles* of the Shannon, along which they are spread, and comparing, by the aid of maps, plans, and sections, its *previous uncontrolled character, with its present improved and subdued condition*—by examining the recently erected noble bridges which now span this river; the capacious locks, and moveable iron roadways by which large steam vessels are enabled to pass; and above all, their permanent and almost imperishable character. The effect of the great weirs should also be duly considered. By these, the hitherto irregular and broken workings of this great stream, through tens of thousands of acres, and along miles of windings, have been so brought under subjection, that the whole has become an easy course of river navigation.

It is true, the picturesque and numerous falls and rapids have been lost or removed—but only to give way to the quiet and useful level which navigation demands. What the eye of the artist may lament, will be compensated to the philanthropist and statesman, when they find in their place the elements of social order and domestic industry. The man of taste may regret the absence of those charms which the rushing and broken stream, and the murmurings of its falling waters, ever give to such river scenery: but the *man of business* will rejoice in anticipating a happy future, when hereafter he contemplates the bustle of trade succeeding to those sources of enjoyment which gave pleasure to the artist or the angler alone: while the blessings of industry and useful employment, which commercial and agricultural advancement ever bring in their train, will have a wholesome influence, where the monotony of silence, with its distressing and almost desolating accompaniments, had hitherto prevailed.

Without personal observation, who can appreciate the engineering difficulties of turning the course of this great river in the numerous places where its bed was to be lowered or levelled—the labour of keeping it in a dry and working condition by the aid of steam power and costly dams—the deepening and widening its course for the passage of large vessels,

with the labour and expense of removing the solid rocky obstructions of this extraordinary river.

Without personal observation, none can appreciate the numerous and extensive improvements effected along these hundred and fifty miles of water, nor can they form an adequate idea of what had to be encountered—seeing that hitherto, there was no precedent of a work of such magnitude, or of this peculiar character.

The river banks, on which the excavated matter now lies heaped, will ever remain a lasting memorial of the great quantity of materials that had been removed from its bed : while the great mass of water which now placidly flows along, illustrates at once the difficulty and the effect of such deepening.

Let it also be remembered that this has been effected not only completely and successfully, but *within the estimated cost*. Here indeed is a new feature in public works. Look to the Rideau navigation in Canada, or to the Caledonian canal in Scotland. What a contrast do they present in this respect.

Whatever mistakes may have been made in the early stages of these works were referable to the difficulty of calculating the results of the new levels of the river, and the effects to be produced by these large masses of water, subject as they were to such flooding as occasionally to raise the levels to the height of many feet. When such an enormous power was to be controlled and regulated, these will not be considered extraordinary by professional men. Looking however to the fact that there was no known precedent for works of this description or magnitude, it may in truth be said, that never were engineering operations carried on, whether as regards their extent—the great objects they embraced—or the large expenditure they involved, in which so few mistakes, or so little unnecessary expenditure had been made.

Here I might stop to complain of the apathy of the many counties along its shores, which threw on the government the task of providing funds for what was so peculiarly within the province of their respective grand juries, namely—the removal of those narrow and antiquated bridges which had hitherto

been so instrumental, not in facilitating, but in obstructing intercourse.

I may name the new and noble bridge of Athlone, connecting Roscommon and Westmeath—that at Portumna, between Galway and Tipperary—at Lanesborough, between Roscommon and Longford—at Carrick-on-Shannon, between Roscommon and Leitrim—at Banagher, between Galway and King's County—at Ruskey, between Roscommon and Leitrim—at Jamestown, between the same counties—those at Cootehall and Knockvicar, with that which crosses the Carnadoe waters, opening a new navigation of over ten miles in extent, to Strokestown. Yet these noble structures, costing above £100,000, have been thrown on the fund provided for *improving the navigation of the river*. To complete the navigable character of the Shannon and give free vent to its mass of waters, those old fashioned and obstructive passes had to be removed, while the new bridges which now span the river, were to be provided with the improved swivel arches, by which alone steam and masted vessels could pass. Besides these nine new and noble bridges may be mentioned the several locks, each in connexion with its great regulating weir across the river, viz., the Victoria lock near Banagher, the great locks at Athlone, Tarmonbary, and Ruskey; the Albert lock at Jamestown, and the Clarendon on the Boyle water. These locks and weirs, from their superior engineering character and execution, are well worthy the examination of professional men. Those works are now completed to the credit of the Commissioners and their able staff of Engineers,* and the satisfaction of Government. I may here add, that they are in a great measure due to the exertions of the then Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord Monteaagle, through whose instrumentality this measure was carried through parliament. I have watched with anxious interest the

* Major General Sir John Fox Burgoyne, R.E., Lieut. Colonel Harry D. Jones, R.E., Richard Griffith, Esq., L.L.D., C.E., and W. T. Mulvany, Esq., C. E., Commissioners. Thomas Rhodes, Esq., Engineer in chief, Messrs. John Long, Charles Ottley, Henry Renton, Thomas Barton, Thomas J. Mulvany, and Lionel Gisborne, resident Engineers.

progress of these works. I have given them the more attention, seeing that both the Commissioners and their works were subjected to severe, and even illiberal criticism during the course of their execution, by those who had never visited them, and were even wholly ignorant of their nature, extent, or operation. In the public prints, and even in Parliament, this useful, all-important undertaking, which should at least have commanded respect, has been spoken of slightly, and, I will say, irreverently. It has been made the topic of vituperation and abuse, and characterised as a wasteful expenditure, and even as an unworthy job. Yet if ever there was a work to which this discreditable epithet was not applicable, it was this great improvement of the Shannon—embracing so directly the important objects of navigation and drainage. The Commissioners appear to have refrained from public controversy. They must have been conscious that their cause would bear the test of examination and time—that its value, and the excellence of its execution would one day be admitted by all—and that these great works would hereafter best speak their own praise. They have achieved what more than volumes of arguments could illustrate, or do justice to. Let the sceptic go and judge for himself.

I have now, my Lord, to record, and be it remembered, that on the eleventh of October, 1849, a steam vessel, conveying a number of scientific gentlemen, several of whom were officially connected with the great midland Railway, which is to cross the Shannon at Athlone, passed from Killaloe to the extremity of Lough Key and near to Lough Allen, in the county of Leitrim. That in its course they passed by or near to the towns or Portumna, Banagher, Shannon Bridge, Athlone, Lanesborough, Longford, Tarmonbary, Newtownforbes, Ruskey, Drumsna, Jamestown, Carrick-on-Shannon, and Leitrim; and to within a short distance of the town of Boyle: thus steaming a continuous course of one hundred and forty miles in fresh water, above the tide-way at Limerick. That in that course they passed through no fewer than eight counties—*coasting*, as it were, along thirty-one miles of Tipperary—eleven miles of

Clare—thirty-eight miles of Galway—nineteen miles of King's-County—twenty miles of Longford—twenty-four miles of Leitrim—and above eighty miles of Roscommon: in all, a *coasting voyage of two hundred and fifty miles*—every mile of which has now the benefit of cheap and easy navigation.

My Lord, this may truly be said to be a great work. It is impossible to resist the hope of an influence similar to that which your Lordship has ascribed to a far less extent of Railway, namely, “the affording facilities for extending improved modes of husbandry, and opening the best and readiest markets for the sale of agricultural produce, and giving extensive employment where the necessities of the labouring population so much require it.”

By the operation of such means, may we not anticipate, that the value of the land and its produce will be increased—the sources of employment multiplied—and the condition of the population ameliorated and raised. These elements of successful industry will be put in action by the means which this great highway of waters will hereafter afford.*

Again, as your Lordship observed, “what extent of increase may not hereafter be expected in better times, when these vast resources shall be more amply developed by that improvement in agriculture now becoming so general?”

* The important consideration of *drainage*, should not here be overlooked, inasmuch as the improvements of the Shannon, and the regulating its waters by the several great weirs, have afforded the means of carrying into effect this object.

Above Athlone, the Commissioners have kept the flood level of the river below that of the extensive tracts of callow lands, which hitherto had been almost useless—cereal and green crops have now replaced the coarse and sour herbage which covered these callows. Below Athlone, the duration of the floods has been greatly diminished. The lowering and regulating the levels of the waters have enabled the legislature to assist proprietors in draining large tracts of valuable land through the enlargement and regulation of their main water-courses and adjacent tributaries—the waters of which were influenced by the levels of the main stream. These exits of the drainage water were witnessed in many directions, during the steamer's course up the river. Independently of the Shannon being now the largest inland navigation in Great Britain, it is also the greatest recipient of arterial drainage in Ireland. Had the Shannon remained as it had been, what a bar to improvement would it have for ever presented.

If these remarks are applicable to the changes and amelioration which *railways* will effect, how much more forcibly do they apply to this great extent of *cheap water communication*, and the aid of steam thus afforded to every harbour and inlet along its extended course. I will here add in the impressive words of your Lordship, joining most cordially in the sentiment expressed, ‘*If ever a work deserved success, it was this*’—the improved navigation of the Shannon, and its tributaries; each county along its shores adding to the aggregate of human industry and employment, and reciprocating those blessings which the hand of nature had placed within reach, requiring but the hand of man for their realization.

Created and fostered by Her Majesty’s Government—carried out by public resources, (provided during years of unexampled pressure) and brought to a consummation under your Lordship’s sway, these great works are destined to open this navigation to the influence of that natural momentum which is the result of private industry and commercial enterprize, supplying to every man the means of improving his own social position, and thus increasing the aggregate of national wealth, power, and prosperity.

Already large steam-vessels, and an improved description of barges, equal to what may be seen on the Thames or the Mersey, now pass freely along its course. Steam-vessels of one hundred horse power daily pass as high as the garrison town of Athlone—the centre town of Ireland, and seventy-five miles above Limerick. Preparations are making to extend that intercourse to Carrick-on-Shannon and Boyle, fifty miles higher up, into the county of Leitrim, where a steam-vessel had not before been seen, nor craft of any kind had floated, beyond the wretched ill-appointed turf cot, or the sailing yacht of some neighbouring amateur, whose enjoyment of the interesting scenery of the numerous lakes and reaches of this river had, like that of the solitary and stately swan which the steamer passed in its course, been doomed to a reluctant and unsocial seclusion, while his graceful craft was spreading its wings to the breeze—unseen and unadmired.

Your Lordship has aptly observed that "it was impossible to over-estimate the advantages which must be conferred by the railway connecting Dublin, Limerick, Cork, and the intermediate districts, in one chain of communication." This is unquestionably true; but how much more applicable when taken in connexion with what I have described—this intermediate line of steam navigation, connecting, as it does the two great lines of railway. It is important also to observe that along the line of this navigation, *no railway ever can exist, nor can there be any other connexion or means of intercourse between the termini of the two Railways, at Athlone, and at Limerick, (a distance of seventy-four miles) than this water line.*

This river line of steam intercourse therefore imparts a double value to both the South Western and Midland Railways; the former of which has so lately received a merited eulogium from your Lordship, while the latter, now in progress through the especial aid of Her Majesty's government, will shortly I doubt not, have an equal claim on your Lordship.

Without depreciating the value of Railway communication, there can be no question as to the superior usefulness of river intercourse, especially through an agricultural country. Except from station to station, a railway from its peculiarities becomes a positive barrier, and is wholly unavailable, as a river, road, or canal would be, for local or domestic intercourse. In fact it keeps even many neighbouring districts and families more apart than before.

The Shannon, on the contrary, enables, and even invites every individual within reach of its waters from the highest to the lowest, to apply his industry and render his efforts available for the common good, and for his own and his neighbour's benefit, whatever may be his occupation, or the extent of his means and business. The peasant who merely cuts his turf for fuel, is enabled to bring his labour to market and to a profitable account, supplying those districts where fuel is deficient. The farmer who feeds his swine—collects his crates of eggs, and poultry for the town market—or raises produce, for his own or the adjoining districts, or for exportation, is enabled, and in

person, to reach the best markets and realize the best prices, with but little expense or loss of time; while the large landholder and extensive grazier will be enabled to send to the metropolis or to the English markets, and on the most advantageous terms, their produce, and their live stock. All will be alike aided and benefitted by cheap and extensive water carriage: while hitherto, all were equally in want of this desideratum, the main element of agricultural prosperity and profitable employment.*

**Extract from the Letter published in 1831, already referred to.*

“The following summary of the state of Ireland, will be found to comprise the leading features of the case.

1.—The population want employment.

2.—That employment can only be supplied by the pursuits of agriculture, internal trade, commerce, and manufactures.

3.—These cannot be promoted without the means of intercourse and interchange, and adequate facilities of transport.

4.—Those latter do not exist in Ireland.

It may be laid down as an indisputable point, and it applies with the greatest force to an agricultural country, that whatever may be the quality of the soil, or the extent of its population; no matter what the natural products may be, without *a facility of intercourse* for persons, and of interchange for produce they avail nothing. They are but the gold in the mine. We need go into no refinements of political economy. We need search for no hidden courses of pauperism or turbulence, but, finding a region with a dense unemployed population, wanting the facilities of interchange for its labor; we may conclude that such a district cannot make any progress in industry or capital, or even in civilization. On the contrary, its evils will increase, the population remain confined to the lowest description of sustenance:—ignorant, easily excited, without industry or emulation, and degraded to the lowest scale of civilized beings.

In England, we find no part south of Durham, more than fifteen miles from water-conveyance. Over three-fourths of the surface, no part is distant from water-carriage more than ten miles; while over one-half of that surface, no part is more than five miles distant from this great means of commercial and trading life. The great manufacturing districts having it in the heart of their towns, and almost at their very doors.

Compare this with Ireland. Entire districts of twenty to thirty miles in extent, and covered with a dense population, almost without a road, yet, at the serious loss of time and labour, bringing their produce over by-ways, bogs, and mountains, upon horses' backs, to raise a comparatively heavy rent, the fruit of which is, but a miserable hovel and a potato diet.

As to internal intercourse in Ireland; besides the Barrow, the Suir, the

Your Lordship will now ask, what more is required? You will say: Government have done their duty—The two great lines of Railway, with this intermediate Shannon link, have all been liberally aided from the public funds; and time, in connexion with the industry and energy of the population, must do the rest.

My Lord, consider the following short statement, and I am much deceived if your Lordship will not concur in admitting that one comparatively insignificant but important link is still wanting in the great chain of internal communication, to complete this triumph of art, energy, and resources, directed by the wisdom and foresight of government.

The river Shannon, with its two hundred miles of navigation, may be considered complete—as regards the transmission of foreign or home produce, or *the purposes of the carrying trade*. So far, however, as regards the means of improved *personal*

Boyne, and other small navigations; we find one prominent feature, one great leading line of available navigation, the *River Shannon*, running through the centre of the island, and offering the advantage of a double coast. Yet this first and most imposing feature in Ireland's statistics, remains unproductive as a means of internal communication, one-half of it almost unknown, and the districts through which it passes for one hundred and fifty British miles above Limerick, deriving no aid from its navigation.

Let us compare, in their aggregate, the relative means of internal intercourse in England and Ireland.

	Miles.
In <i>England</i> , there are of canals.....	2174
Of navigable rivers.....	1920
Of canals in progress.....	40
Of railroads made and in progress.....	500
	— 4634
In <i>Ireland</i> , there are of canals.....	270
Of navigable rivers.....	217
	— 487

River Shannon from its source to the sea, unimproved 230

The contrast is striking. Could it be expected that the contrast would not be equally striking in the condition of the respective populations of the two countries."—*C. W. Williams on Inland Navigation, 1831.*"

This was the state of things in 1831; it need not here be stated how enormously the means of transit have been increased in England, and how little has yet been done in Ireland in this respect.

intercourse—(a *sine qua non* in the progress of internal domestic trading,) there remains one section still unsupplied with the means either of quick, cheap, or convenient transit. I allude to *that section between Limerick and the deep water of Killaloe, where alone steam navigation can begin its upward course.* It is with reference to this section and its peculiarities, that I now appeal to your Lordship, and these peculiarities are worthy of especial notice.

I am not here supposing that this interval of obstruction was overlooked by government when planning the great work of the Shannon improvement. By no means. This section of fifteen miles has already received its due measure of aid and attention. Circumstances however which could not have been anticipated have now given an exceptional character to these few miles out of the two hundred, along which the Shannon extends its sway.

My Lord, *these fifteen miles of river never can be available as a means of quick, cheap, or satisfactory intercourse for travellers or traders,* and for the following reasons.—

Nearly three fourths of the entire fall of the river, from its source to the sea, is thrown, by nature, into this short reach. The Shannon at Carrick, one hundred and twenty-five miles above Limerick, is *one hundred and thirty feet* above the tide-way at that city: yet, no less than *ninety-eight* of those are, as it were, compressed into this short interval, between Limerick and Killaloe. The consequence is, that while on the upper one hundred and ten miles of this river, there are but thirty-two feet of fall, this lower reach of but fifteen miles is encumbered with no less than fourteen locks, averaging seven feet fall to each.

It would be a great mistake were we to complain of this remarkable anomaly in the levels of this great river so different as they are from almost all others, seeing that it is this very irregularity which nature has interposed, that gives to those one hundred and fifty miles, its nearly level water, and its navigable capability and value. The interposition, however, of these fourteen locks, with their rise of ninety-eight feet, becomes, a barrier to every kind of intercourse, except that of trade in loaded barges. Merchants and traders, travellers and tourists,

require a rapidity and convenience wholly incompatible with the delays and obstructions incident to this portion of the navigation. Indirectly then, but extensively, we see how these obstructions, which are as nothing in the way of trade, become so mischievous a drag on the trader or commercial traveller. These are here met at the moment of their departure from Limerick, in pursuit of business or pleasure, with a tedious and costly conveyance, whether they go by land or by water, seeing that the high-road is of an equally difficult character, being, like all roads of old, circuitous and hilly.

How then is this difficulty to be encountered? *By a Railway alone.*

In the year 1845, when the continuation of the Great South-Western Railway, was under consideration, the difficulties, delays and expense incident to this portion of the river, was strongly felt—experience having proved it to be the great impediment to an extended intercourse, by the Shannon route, then beginning to attract attention. A Railway was consequently projected for this important line, forming part of the “*Limerick, Ennis, and Killaloe Junction Railway*,” for this, an act of parliament was obtained and the necessary deposits paid. The subsequent depression of Railway property, however, unfortunately caused its abandonment, even before a sod was turned.

Through the want of a Railway from Limerick to Killaloe, the Great Southern Railway now loses the traffic from Clare and Galway, and the Shannon line. While the travelling portion of the public from those districts, on their way to the metropolis, are compelled to pass through the middle districts near Portarlington, until they reach the Railway.

During the late severe pressure in 1846-7 and in this very district, and with the view of giving employment to the population, the providing a more level and shorter road between Limerick and Killaloe was in part undertaken under the act for the relief of the poor. Like many other works, from the stoppage of the funds provided under that act, the construction of this road was also abandoned.

The want of this connecting link, then, works a serious injury to all interests. It severs the great chain of personal traffic and profitable intercourse between the north and the south. It breaks *the only connexion that ever can exist*, and for which no substitute except a railway can be provided, between the two great railway lines of the west, at Limerick and Athlone, and to the injury of both; and should the town and port of Galway hereafter be adopted as a transatlantic mail packet station, the delays arising out of this improved section of the Shannon must be greatly aggravated. In truth, the navigation of the Shannon, completed at so great an expense, and every way so worthy of national support, remains, as regards *personal intercourse*, shut out from Limerick and the south, and becomes, comparatively, as a sealed book. Yet, this short interval between Limerick and Killaloe should be considered, as it virtually is, but a *portion of the great Shannon line*, and means provided for the easy and cheap conveyance of *people*, as has already been done for that of *merchandise and produce*.

Of the necessity and eligibility, then, of a railway over this short distance, there can be no question, the difficulty lies, without the aid of Government, in providing the necessary funds. A single line of the cheapest construction, and suited to the conveyance of passengers alone, is all that is required. Although the distance by water, or by the present high and hilly road is *fifteen* miles; that by the railroad would be less than *twelve*. There are no hills to be cut through—no embankments to be made—and not a bridge requiring masonry. I am also prepared to prove that this short line, requiring but a moderate sum for its construction would be a profitable and a paying line.

My Lord, it is not for me on the present occasion to suggest any particular course of proceeding, or to go into detail, towards effecting the important object to which I have taken the liberty of drawing your attention. In concert with the Shannon Commissioners and the Board of Works, with the concurrence of Her Majesty's Government, and with your Lordship's powerful

advocacy, there will be no difficulty in effecting this useful and necessary work.

I conclude by directing your Lordship's attention to the following appropriate resolution, agreed to by the grand juries of several of the Shannon counties, so long back as the year 1794, and I now congratulate your Lordship on being the viceroy under whose rule these important objects, after a struggle of half-a-century, will, at length, be brought to a satisfactory conclusion. This resolution was as follows, viz:—

At the Shannon assizes of 1794, the High Sheriffs, and Grand Juries of the counties of Roscommon, Leitrim, Mayo, Galway, Clare, Limerick, King's county, and Tipperary, resolved, "that the completing the navigation of the river Shannon and the great rivers adjoining thereto, from Lough Allen to Limerick, will lead effectually to improve and open the home and foreign markets, to the produce of more than two millions of acres of land in the heart of the kingdom of Ireland; and that the execution of this great navigation will effectually advance the commerce, manufactures and agriculture of this kingdom, and the strength of the empire at large."

I have the honor to remain,

Your Lordship's obedient servant,

CHARLES WYE WILLIAMS.

APPENDIX.

- I.—*Extracts from Major General John Fox Burgoyne's Report to Government on the State of the Shannon Navigation.*
- II.—*Extracts from the Reports to the Board of Public Works on the River Shannon, by Thomas Rhodes, C.E.*
- III.—*Extracts from "A Journey throughout Ireland, during the Spring, Summer, and Autumn of 1834, by H. D. Inglis."*
- IV.—*Extracts from a Tract on Irish Inland Navigation, by C. W. Williams, 1831.*



APPENDIX. (No. I.)

Extracts from Major General Burgoyne's Report to Government on the state of the Shannon navigation.

THE river Shannon, rising within fifteen miles of Sligo, in the north of Ireland, and falling into the sea below Limerick, in the south, cuts the country longitudinally in two parts; dividing the five counties comprising the Province of Connaught from the rest of the kingdom. It thus forms a feature of the greatest importance, as the means of drawing off the waters from an immense range of country—of maintaining internal intercourse—and, on account of its outlets, with the sea to Limerick on the south-west; and by means of two great canals leading from different parts of its waters to Dublin, on the east coast.

The attention of Government having been called to the imperfections existing in this great river, and to the propriety of ascertaining its present state, and its capabilities; a Commission was appointed for that purpose, consisting of Captain Mudge, R. N.; Thomas Rhodes, Esq., Civil Engineer, and myself. Our preliminary arrangements have been explained in the first set of Reports, and the Government are now put in possession of the final result of the investigation.

The Shannon requires to be considered in several distinct portions, which vary in character, and are influenced by very different circumstances.

The interval from the sea to the port of Limerick, a distance of eighty miles, has been minutely described in the Reports of Captain Mudge, who points out the numerous difficulties and dangers, as well as the neglected state of this part of the navigation.

It appears, however, that there are not any funds allotted to this very necessary object, nor even any one entrusted with the smallest charge or authority; in consequence of which neglect, the port of Limerick, which ought to be the rallying point of a very extensive trade, struggles against impediments that must continue to draw from it many of its natural resources.

At Limerick, shallows and rapids commence so immediately, that the tide has but little influence above; and it has become necessary to have recourse to the means of a short canal from the city itself.

Ascending from thence to Killaloe, (a distance of fifteen miles) the navigation, partly by river and partly by the side canals, is in the hands of the Limerick Navigation Company.

From Killaloe commences the great lake called Lough Derg, twenty-three miles in length, and from one to four miles broad, with wide deep bays and inlets.

This lake is, generally speaking, free from the dangers of rocks or shoals, but its very expanse of water rendered it unfit for the class of vessels that worked upon the still water and imperfect navigation at either end; and considerable delay was occasioned to the sailing vessels, by the circumstance of the prevailing winds being in the direction of its great length.

The Middle Shannon, that is, the interval between Lough Derg and Lough Ree, comprises thirty-six miles of generally broad deep river, with occasional shoals and obstructions, natural or artificial, which are passed by lateral canals. Nearly midway between the extremities of this portion of the Shannon, the Grand Canal branches off on one side to Dublin, eighty miles distant, and on the other, thirteen miles to Ballinasloe, in the County of Galway.

Lough Ree is seventeen miles in length, and bears nearly the same character as Lough Derg, with the exception that its principal line of sailing course is somewhat more obstructed by rocky shoals.

In the Upper Shannon, namely, from Lough Ree to Lough Allen (forty-six miles) the shoals are more frequent and extensive than in the lower portions, though still the small lakes and river afford very generally a deep wide canal.

Many lateral canals and other works have been executed at different periods by Government, to open the navigation of this part; they are, however, extremely imperfect and defective, as will be seen by one of the accompanying Reports which explains in detail the great impediments existing in this upper district.

From the above sketch it will be perceived how very imperfect is the state of the whole navigation of the Shannon.

It is indeed surprising to find so noble a river running through so fine a country in such a state of neglect. The soil on its banks is of the most fertile nature; iron, marble, slate, and various other productions of superior quality are also to be found in abundance. Though great capabilities exist for easy intercourse, a perfect stagnation unhappily prevails, and where forests of masts and the bustling activity of commerce should be witnessed, the scene is desolate, and only varied occasionally by

the passage of some struggling boat, which, with difficulty, and perhaps with only half a cargo, is striving to make its way to one of the Dublin canals.

There is, perhaps, no part of the British dominions, where such an opening is presented for prospective advantages.

APPENDIX. (No. II.)

Extracts from Mr. Rhodes' Reports to the Board of Public Works, on the navigation of the river Shannon.

From Limerick to Killaloe, and from thence to Lough Allen, the river Shannon presents a diversified and magnificent character, interspersed by numerous fine lakes and broad waters; it is in many parts surrounded by scenery of a beautiful description, and the whole forms a navigable line of communication (*at present in a very imperfect state*) of one hundred and forty-three statute miles, (above Limerick,) running in a north and south direction.

Description of the Shannon.—Taking a view of this majestic river, its lakes and lateral branches which receive the drainage of a considerable portion of Ireland, they also appear as if formed and designed *by nature* as the great arteries of the kingdom for facilitating its agricultural and commercial purposes; by making out a splendid line of intercourse for an expeditious and cheap mode of conveyance through a populous country, superior to any in the empire; and requiring only a little assistance from art to render it beneficially useful to an unlimited extent; but, her grand designs have hitherto been in a great measure frustrated, and it may not improperly be compared to a “*sealed book*.”

Obstructions.—These are caused by a few natural, but the greater part are *artificial obstructions*, which dam up the water, and inundate the country to a formidable extent.

Advantages of removing the obstructions.—Looking to the great extent to which this country is inundated, and for the greater portion of the year, it appears astonishing that it should have been allowed to remain so long in this state, when its baneful influence to the cultivation of the lands, reclaiming the

bogs, and the salubrity of the country, are considered ; offering, as it does, a wide field for improvement, which, if commenced and prosecuted, would give permanent relief and useful employment to thousands of its inhabitants, (in various pursuits) *now in a state absolutely wanting the necessaries of life, and driven to desperation.*

On the great line in the vicinity the climate is naturally very humid, which is, no doubt, in a measure caused by the sluggish nature of the river.

Transit of produce.—At the present time the produce exported and imported to and from the countries of Leitrim, Roscommon, Mayo, and part of Sligo, are carried to and from the shipping ports on the north-west coast, or to Longford or Killashee, on the Royal Canal, *a distance more or less than thirty miles, by land carriage, along roads of an inferior description, with vehicles of equally bad construction.* This frequently occupies a man, horse and cart, with from 16 to 20 cwt. two days and a half, bringing for back carriage general merchandize, timber, iron, and slate for building.

The towns upon the line of the Shannon appear to be well situated for commanding the trade of the surrounding country, but, hitherto, the inefficient state of the river has been a considerable check to their prosperity, deriving little or no benefit from this source in the transit of the various goods and merchandize, although many of them are so remotely situated from sea-ports.

Importance of the Shannon Navigation.—By adopting the proposed improvements, and rendering the Shannon permanently navigable, *it would open a great thoroughfare and line of intercourse from the two extremities of the kingdom ; thus bringing those parts hitherto separated by great distances, into close and constant communication, which would be the case by applying the great auxiliary of steam power, as the passage of the whole line might be performed in one day, now frequently occupying a month, or six weeks ; thus rendering the transit of goods certain and cheap.* Here may be seen the great advantage that would accrue to the agriculturist, grazier, merchant, and general trader, as they would then have *an easy, punctual, and cheap conveyance for their several commodities and produce, and to the farmer in particular, giving him the opportunity of consulting the various markets along the line, that he might be able to obtain a fair value for his produce,* while, at present, he is generally confined by the expense of land-carriage to the nearest market, and even this, in many cases, at a great distance, *and his profits, if any, are consumed by the mode of transit.*

The opening of the Shannon will be the certain means of physical improvement to the people along its banks and in its

vicinity, and to the country at large ; and is deserving the most serious consideration of the legislature ; as *the establishing of lines of intercourse, and promoting habits of industry among the people, would be the most effectual means of dissipating the present feelings of discontent, and of preventing the recurrence of those lawless acts which are so much to be regretted throughout this part of the country.* But it is a work of too much magnitude, under all the circumstances, to be attempted by any individual interest, and I am of opinion that no great and really permanent system of improvement must be looked for upon the general line of the Shannon, *but through the intervention of legislative enactment and superintendence.*

APPENDIX. (No. III)

Extract from "Ireland in 1834." By H. D. Inglis.

It impossible to ascend by water from Limerick to the village of Castle Connell, owing to the rapids which intervene ; but the road, although not running close to the river, commands its banks, it carries the traveller through as lovely a country as the imagination can well picture. In variety and woody fertility it is not surpassed by the most celebrated of the English vales, none of which can boast, as an adjunct to its scenery, so noble a river as the Shannon.

To the lover of the picturesque, the banks of the Shannon between Portumna and Banagher present little that is attractive. But to other minds there may be an interest of perhaps a higher kind. We are navigating in a steam vessel a river—here a hundred and thirty miles from the sea, and we know it to be navigable nearly a hundred miles higher. Its volume appears to be as great as when we saw it at Limerick :—it is several hundred yards broad, and twenty and thirty feet deep. What a body of water is this ? What are the Thames, the Medway, the Severn, the Trent, the Humber, the Tweed, or the Clyde, *a hundred and thirty miles from the sea ?* I am not sure if they exist at all, or if any of them do, they are but brawling streams for the minnow to sport in. There is, in fact, an approach to the sublime in the spectacle of such a river as this ; and the

feeling receives aid from the character of its banks. These are wide and apparently interminable plains—uninclosed, almost level with the river, bearing luxuriant crops of herbage, and feeding innumerable herds. *We see scarcely any habitations, no villages or hamlets, and no road or traffic on the banks.* The meadows of which I speak extend, on both sides of the river, the greater part of its course from Banagher to Portumna. These meadows are all overflowed during the winter, and are let for grazing at a very high rent. Killaloe I found an improving town. This improvement arises from several causes, but chiefly is owing to the spirited proceedings of the Inland Steam Navigation Company:—a company whose objects are most closely connected with the improvement of Ireland. *The improvement of the navigation of the Shannon and its tributaries is deserving of the especial protection and aid of Government.*

The bridge (over the Shannon at Athlone) is altogether a disgrace to the town and kingdom. Notwithstanding that between Athlone and Portumna the Shannon receives the two Brusna rivers, the Suck, and many other smaller tributaries, it appears at Athlone to carry an undiminished volume of water. Above Athlone bridge—*upwards of one hundred and fifty miles from the sea*—the river is 300 yards wide, and ranges from 20 to 35 feet in depth.

Athlone is a great military station.—Extensive barracks, both for foot regiments and for artillery, lie in its immediate neighbourhood; and *on the Connaught side*, a line of fortifications has been erected. In the very centre of the town, too, there is an ancient castle, with a strong central tower and massive bastions. *All these places are fully garrisoned.*

I now left Boyle for Enniskillen. For several miles after leaving Boyle, the road skirts Lord Lorton's domain, and then passes through a rather fine country, to Carrick-on-Shannon. Here I again found that majestic river, which I had parted from a month before; and I still found it the same noble stream. The Shannon, at Carrick, is upwards of two hundred miles from the sea; and I scarcely could discover any diminution of the stream, which flows a hundred miles lower down.

I have now seen the banks of the Shannon from its mouth to its source; and I think I may venture to say that, although we cannot find on the banks of the Shannon that precipitous wood scenery which distinguishes the Rhine, nor the richness and softness which lie along the Loire or the Garonne, infinitely greater variety is found throughout the course of the Shannon than is presented either on these, or any other rivers, that I recollect.—*And the Shannon possesses one attribute, which, as far as I know, is exclusively its own.—It is navigable, (with some slight interruptions) from its mouth to its*

source, a distance of two hundred and thirty-four miles. In the extent of its navigation, therefore, though not of its course, it ranks with many of the great continental rivers.

APPENDIX. (No. IV.)

*Extracts from a Tract on Irish Inland Navigation, by
Charles Wye Williams, Esq., 1831.*

The river Shannon, unequalled in the British empire, embraces two hundred and forty-seven miles of continuous navigation, (while its tributaries afford that of above one hundred miles in addition), and from the circumstances of its running through the centre of the kingdom, may be compared, for the purposes of intercourse, to double that length of coast. The advantages of water conveyance are thus presented to an extent of country equal to the whole line of coast between Belfast and Cork, or to more than the entire eastern coast of England. The Shannon washes the shores of ten counties out of thirty-two. All of these are abundant in population, and susceptible of great agricultural improvement; and although many of them are periodically exposed to the greatest distress and even famine, yet are without the power of mutual relief or co-operation.

Taking then the double length of coast which the ten counties presents to the navigation, at five hundred miles, and which, considering the extent of the bays, inlets, and rivers, is under the fact, it leaves an average (on the main stream of the river) of fifty miles of *coast* to each county. This fact alone is sufficiently indicative of what may be done through the instrumentality of this one river.

Nature appears to have done its part. The capabilities of the river almost provoke the population to industry and intercourse. All the elements of internal and profitable traffic are in abundance. It cannot, therefore, be necessary to urge more strongly than by the bare enumeration of these facts, the value of an intercourse, which, from some cause or other, Ireland has never yet possessed. How then can we convey to English eyes the picture of the Shannon through its great course. Let us

suppose a navigable river taking its rise in some distant county in England, as far from Liverpool as Essex or Middlesex. Suppose it occasionally spreading itself into noble and picturesque sheets of water of twenty miles in length, with numerous islands, receiving the waters of many rivers, and stretching its bays into the adjacent counties, as it were to increase the measure of its utility and beauty. Imagine it winding its way through Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire, Northamptonshire and Warwickshire, and the rich soil of Leicestershire; and after passing by Staffordshire, Derbyshire, and Cheshire, and running a course of two hundred and forty miles, falling into the estuary of the Mersey in Lancashire. See it presenting to each of those counties the benefit of fifty miles of navigation, and we shall have a correct idea of the extent and capabilities of this river.

But how shall we describe the state in which it has remained for ages as to trading intercourse; and in which three-fourths of it remain to this very hour:—absolutely wanting in all the incidents of navigation. For nearly one hundred miles of its length, not a sail or boat to be met with on its waters—no appearance of utility—no indications of industry or capital; even its beauties unknown—deficient to an extent scarcely credible in roads and approaches to it, and consequently having but little connexion with the interior to which nature designed its influence should extend: without any employment of its waters, it flows unheeded by, and unproductive of any good. Over many of its districts of great extent, from the absence of that control which human skill and means could have effected, its waters become a source of wide-spreading waste.

The inevitable result of this neglect and inactivity is, that instead of becoming the direct means of connexion and intercourse between this family of counties situated on its banks, and of the consolidation of the interests of their respective population, it has, on the contrary, grown up, and remains to the present a positive and mischievous line of *separation*: the enemy, rather than the ally of social life. Instead of proving the parent of family and trading alliances, it has engendered nothing but a repulsive spirit, productive of enmity, district broils, and almost civil war.

So effectually has this alienation been accomplished through the succession of ages, and this fourth part of Ireland been detached by the Shannon, that it became not merely distinct as a province, but as a little kingdom in itself; proverbially the country of a people *sui generis*; wild, lawless, and turbulent.

“The kingdom of Connaught,” to this hour, is a sort of title to which its inhabitants lay claim on the very plea of that separation, for which the Shannon, in their eyes, appeared to have been destined. A little consideration on the part of the

the rulers of the land should have taught them to regard it as designed by a bountiful Providence to be rather a bond of union, the high road of the neighbouring counties, and a source of mutual dependence, strength, protection, and prosperity. Do we not see in all this the primary cause of that absence of employment at home, which drives such hordes to England in search of labor? This very "*Kingdom*," sending out the entire of that peasantry which migrates annually to England (after a fatiguing journey of one hundred miles by Dublin) and to the midland districts of Ireland, where they go to assist in gathering-in the potato harvest, to the number of many thousands.

Need we go further in explaining the cause of the want of approaches to the river; of bridges to connect the neighbouring counties; of improved intercourse on its waters; or the incidents of trade upon its banks.

Roads, and even mail-coach roads, in many situations, run within a few miles of it, yet the river itself remains inaccessible from them.

Mr. Nimmo, in his evidence before the Lords' Committee, in 1824, observes—"It is remarkable, that, upon the western coast of the broad part of the Shannon, *we have not a single landing-place.* This complaint was made to me last season; and, upon examination, I found it was a most desirable thing to make provision for landing-places on both sides of the river. *We have no quays or roads to the water at any part of the Shannon, except at the bridges.*"

Is it possible to read this statement and be surprised at the population being in want of employment and disturbed?

Under such circumstances, how can the labor of these districts leave any return to the farmer? How can he be induced to employ the now idle hands upon his land? There is, in fact, no inducement to turn the available surplus labor to account, and it is now dissipated in the destruction of property, the turning up the lands of peaceable proprietors without ostensible motive, and merely because the want of employment creates dissatisfaction, and turns every circumstance into a grievance. This, too, where, if the farmer had sufficient inducement to expend more labor upon his land, not an idle hand would be found in the country, which is invariably but half labored and half productive.

To remedy this evil, we must go back to the first cause: the want of means to bring labor and the fruit of labor to market, and thus enable it to find its value.

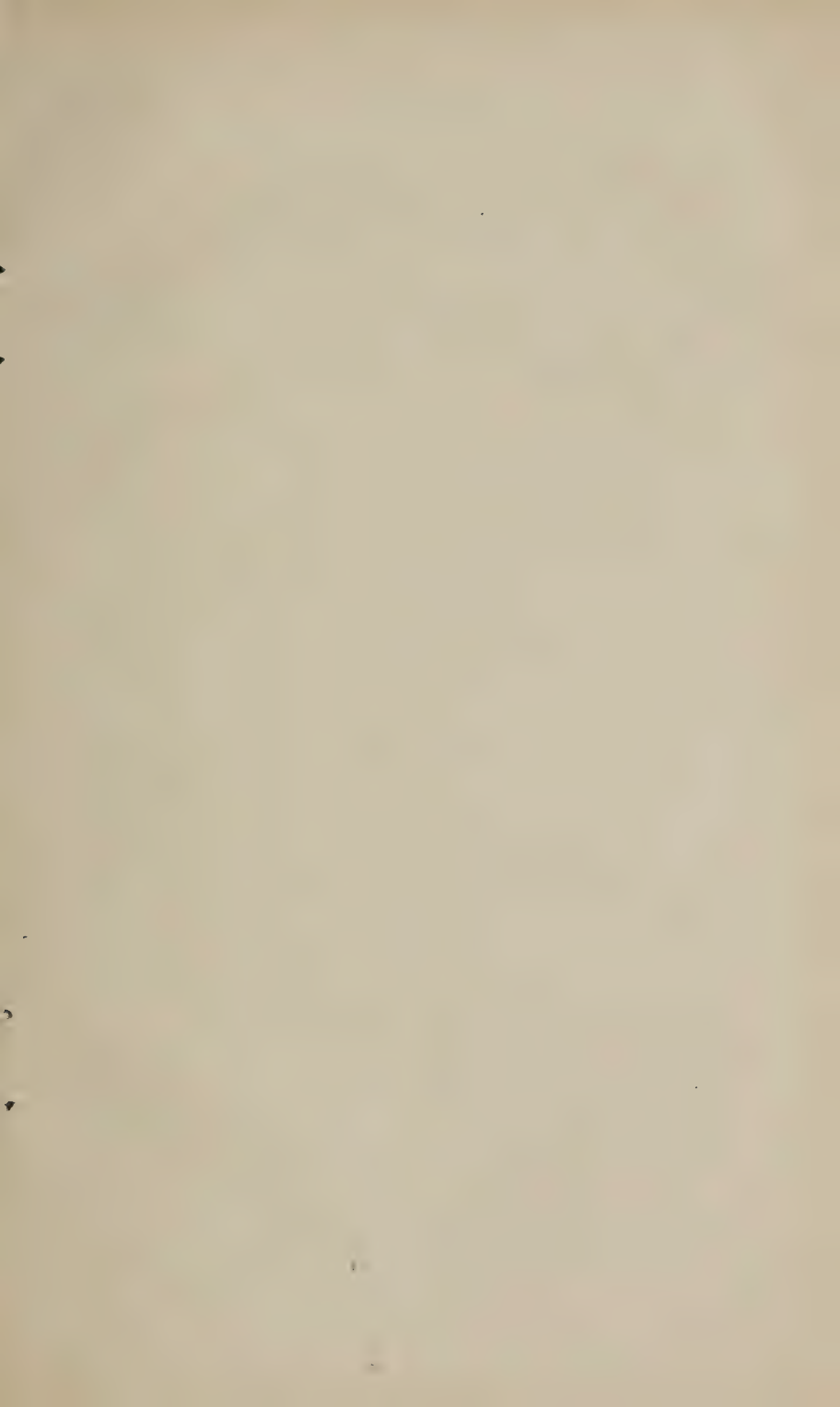
On the entire five hundred miles of *coast* of the Shannon there was not twelve months back a single crane; an article which, in England, is as common as a waggon, or an anchor.

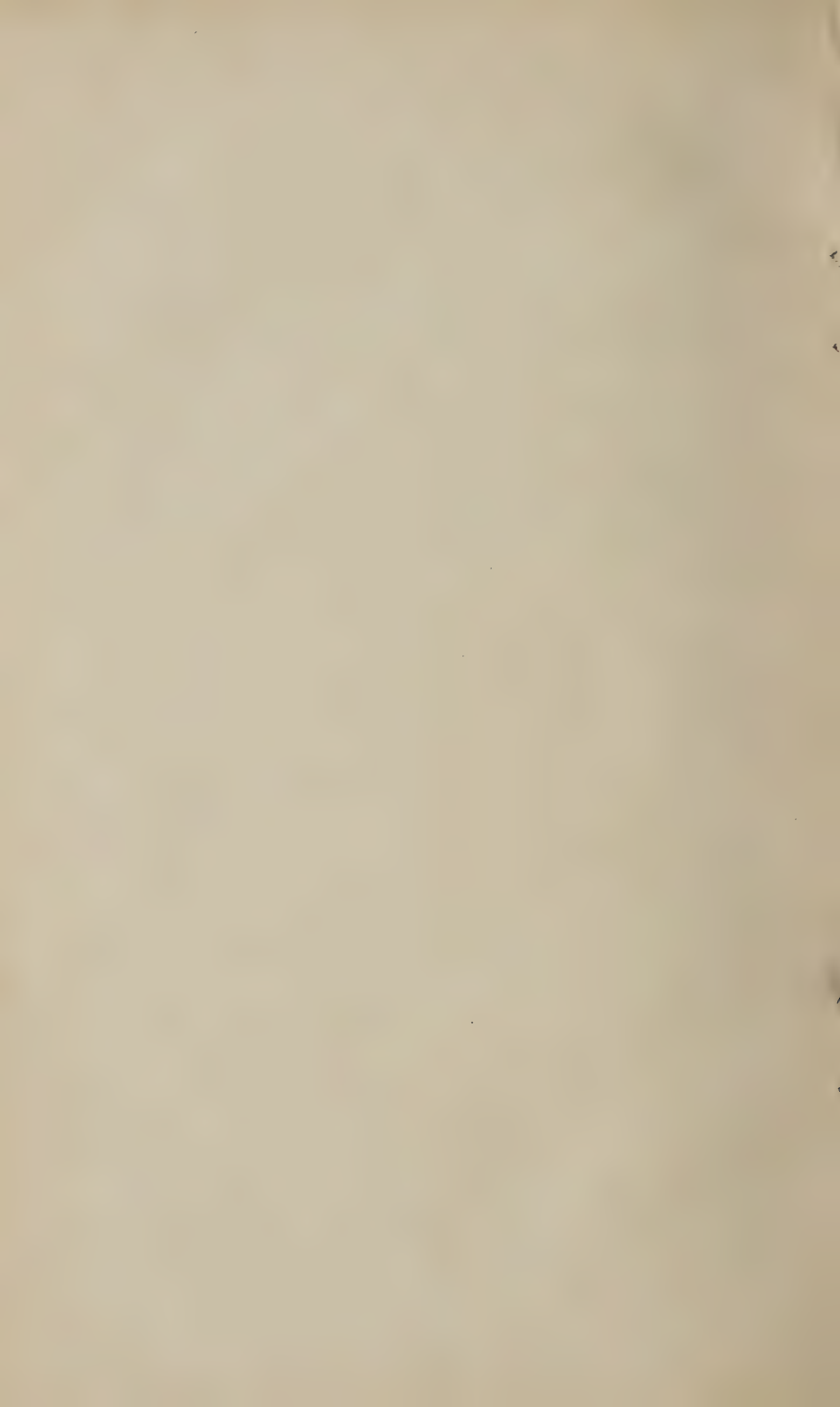
It is a melancholy fact, that the towns and districts of Ireland, with the names of which the public ear has been familiarised

lately as the scenes of outrage or distress, are, almost without exception, those which are directly connected with the subject before us; and that those names mark at once *the line of disturbance, and the line of the Shannon.*

Let then this river be regarded in its great features—bisecting the island, and running with unprofitable splendour in its course of two hundred and forty miles through the heart of the country, with a dense population within reach of its ameliorating influence:—a population young in civilization and social habits; ignorant, uneducated, unemployed, and dissatisfied.

Let it then be asked, is it consistent with common sense to doubt the effect of interchange and intercourse on such a population? Is it reasonable to suppose, that such a river, were its resources developed, could fail of giving value to the labor of the population, and of turning the weakness, the divisions, and the wants of the population into strength, unity, and prosperity?





REPORT

OF

THE DIRECTORS

TO

THE PROPRIETORS OF THE CITY OF DUBLIN
STEAM PACKET COMPANY.

*15 Eden-quay, Dublin,
October 25th, 1850.*

THE Directors in making their forty-fifth half-yearly Report to the Proprietors, regret having to communicate that the opposition which commenced last November, has since been persevered in without any relaxation.

In July last, the steamer *Minerva*, belonging to the Cork Company, was advertised to ply in opposition to this Company, on the line between Kingstown and Liverpool, at one half the usual passenger fares. The Directors did not hesitate, at once, to make a corresponding reduction on the evenings when the *Minerva* sailed, and they had the satisfaction to find that such was the confidence of the public, and the desire to support the vessels of this Company, that by far the larger proportion of the passengers travelled by them.

The Directors, after some weeks' experience, felt also warranted in reducing the fares on the alternate, or unopposed days—a measure which was favorably received by the public, inasmuch as it promoted the convenience of passengers by preventing the crowding of the vessels on the opposition nights.

The *Minerva* was continued on the line until early in the present month, when she ceased to ply between Kingstown and Liverpool.

“ 11th September, 1850.

“ Mr. Codd suggested as a possible means of effecting a settlement of the steam companies' contest, the following plan:—

“ The Waterford Company, the Cork Company, and Messrs. Malcomson, to unite in appointing as their representative Mr. George Pim.

“ The British and Irish Company, and the City of Dublin Company, to unite in appointing as their representative Mr. Thomas Wilson.

“ Each of these gentlemen to be fully instructed by his constituents, and then to meet and endeavour to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion.

“ This suggestion was acceded to by all the contending parties.

“ Mr. Pim agreed to act for the country parties; but Mr. Wilson, being reluctant to act for those in Dublin, unless in the presence of other parties, suggested that Mr. Arthur Guinness, Mr. Thomas Crosthwait, and Mr. Codd should be present at the conference, and should participate in the effort to effect a settlement.

“ The contending parties all agreed to this proposition, it being distinctly understood, that the conference is to be considered as strictly confidential, and that if it prove unsuccessful, what may occur shall not be binding on any party, or be in any way alluded to by them.”

The Directors have to express their regret, that this renewed effort to put an end to the opposition by the intervention of such influential parties, was equally ineffectual as the preceding. They repeat, however, that they are, as they ever have been, willing to leave the entire conduct and proceedings of this Company in reference to the present contest, unconditionally to the arbitration of competent and disinterested parties.

All efforts to arbitrate, and all attempts at mediation, having thus proved fruitless, no alternative remained for the Directors, but a perseverance in those measures of self-defence which they had been forced to adopt.

In pursuance of such measures, arrangements had early been made, and all classes of expenditure reduced, having due regard to the continued efficiency of the establishment, and the maintenance of the Company's vessels. And the Directors have much satisfaction in stating, that without a single exception, these reductions have been submitted to with the utmost cheerfulness, and that even increased diligence and zeal have been manifested by all in the service, in carrying on the business, and promoting the interests of the company.

That these arrangements have been successful is proved by the fact, that notwithstanding the low rates introduced and charged by the opposition vessels, the Directors have been enabled to provide for all the engagements, necessary disbursements, and working expenses of the establishment, and for the most efficient maintenance of the Company's floating property, leaving a deficiency of only £588. 14s. 9d. on the half-year's trading.

The Proprietors will not fail to observe, as it sufficiently marks the wasteful character of the opposition, that while it has deprived this Company of the usual dividend, it has also continued to deprive the shareholders of the several opposing Companies of any return on their own capital, and through the instrumentality alone of those who have the conduct and management of their affairs, and in pursuit of objects in which the shareholders of such opposing companies had no interest whatever.

The causing so large an amount of capital to be thus absolutely unproductive, renders not merely the commercial but moral responsibility of the aggressors doubly great.

The amount embarked by this Company, together with the large aggregate capital of the several parties and companies involved in this wasteful process, is above one million sterling.

Thus, there is a large annual amount of what should, and otherwise would have been, a legitimate profit, unnecessarily wasted—literally thrown away.

This is a state of things of which there neither is, nor ever has been, a parallel.

If the opposition are desirous of continuing this attack until it becomes a mere question of means and powers of endurance, and if they are in an absolutely independent position as to resources, they may, doubtless, do so for a still longer period.

Your Directors, however, fortified as they are by the support of their co-proprietors and of the public, are fully prepared for the result, and look forward to it with undiminished confidence.

The opposition may continue to waste their own resources, but the permanent stability of this Company is beyond the reach of their power or influence. The half-yearly dividends of the Proprietors may, for a time, be suspended, but they have the satisfaction of knowing that their capital, together with the powers and efficiency of the Company, will continue unimpaired.

The contract entered into with the Lords of the Admiralty for the conveyance of the two daily mails between Kingstown and Holyhead was commenced on the 1st of May, and has been satisfactorily carried on. When the Directors tendered for this service, they were under the expectation that the Lords of the Admiralty would have lent or chartered two of their packets for some months, during which period they could have made arrangements for providing the necessary additional vessels, without withdrawing any from the Company's established lines.

As this expectation was not realised, the Directors, acting on invitation from the Lords of the Admiralty, entered into negotiation for the purchase of two of their iron steam-packets—the St. Columba and Llewellyn—and which negotiations were concluded on satisfactory terms.

By this arrangement, but one only of the Company's vessels—the Eblana—has been temporarily withdrawn from her usual line, and which deviation will only be required until the Company's new vessel, now building in London for the mail service, shall be ready for sea.

The Directors conclude by submitting the statement of the debts, credits, and effects of the Company on the 1st September last, pursuant to the provisions of the Company's act of parliament, and they have the satisfaction of referring to it in confirmation of the opinion they have expressed on the present occasion as to the stability and financial independence of the company.

The following were Mr. Malcomson's nine conditions:—

1. "That the purchase of the Senator Screw Company's share of the Dublin and London line by Malcomson Brothers be acknowledged as valid from the date of their entering on the occupation of it.

2. That two parties working a line in conjunction, and dividing receipts, be considered partners as regards that line, and each responsible to the other for any breach of the non-interference principle committed on account of such joint interest.

3. That the placing of the "Devonshire" between Waterford and Liverpool was a breach of the non-interference principle as regards the Waterford Company, and committed on account of the Dublin line, occupied conjointly by the City of Dublin and British and Irish Companies.



3 0112 061936453

8

4. That the Waterford Company and Malcomson Brothers be considered distinct parties.

5. The Waterford Company claim for all damages to their trade between Waterford and Liverpool from the Devonshire being placed on that line; and they further claim the loss of taking retaliatory proceedings on the Dublin and Liverpool line, and on the Belfast and Liverpool line.

6. Malcomson Brothers claim for all damages to their trade between Dublin and London since their first occupation; all damages to their trade between Dublin and Waterford and between Waterford and London; as also all damages to their Dutch trade; and they further claim the loss of taking retaliatory proceedings on the Dublin and Liverpool line and the Dublin and Belfast line.

7. The conditions of this arbitration being to justify Malcomson Brothers' opposition on the City of Dublin Company's line, Malcomson Brothers decline to arbitrate any claim for loss to the City of Dublin Company arising out of such opposition.

8. The conditions of this arbitration being to justify the Waterford Company's opposition on the City of Dublin Company's line, the Waterford Company decline to arbitrate any claim for loss to the City of Dublin Company for such opposition,

9. That the respective parties be responsible that their agents do not interfere, directly or indirectly, with the lines occupied by the others."